

President elected; record budget passed

By William H. Perkins Jr.
Editor

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SPECIAL EDITION

Messengers to the 166th annual meeting of the Mississippi Baptist Convention October 30-31 at First Church, Jackson, elected a new president and approved a record budget to fund their ministries in the state, nation, and abroad.

Frank Pollard, pastor of First Church, Jackson, was elected to his first term as president of the convention, which is presently composed of nearly 2,100 churches that band together in voluntary cooperation to advance the Gospel of Jesus Christ at home and around the world.

Pollard received 717 votes to 192 votes for William P. Smith III, missions director for Lee Association in Tupelo.

Bill Hardin, pastor of First Church, Picayune, was elected to his first term as first vice-president of the convention, and Ernest Sadler, missions director for Jackson Association in Pascagoula, was elected to his first term as second vice-president.

Hardin received 485 votes to 139 votes for Paul Blanchard, missions director for Winston Association in Louisville.

Sadler was unopposed.

Also reelected for one-year terms were recording secretary Gus Merritt, a retired pastor who resides in Newton, and assistant recording secretary Michael Weeks, pastor of Pleasant Hill Church, Olive Branch.

The top three office holders will serve a term of one year and will be eligible for reelection to a second term.

Messengers overwhelmingly approved a record Cooperative Program budget of \$30,522,692, an increase of 1.58% over the current budget. A total of 35% of the new budget is dedicated to the Southern Baptist Convention, the same percentage as the past several years.

The theme of the annual meeting was "By Grace — Redeemed, Renewed, Restored, Resurrected." Jeffery Parker, pastor of Southside Church in Jackson, preached the convention sermon. Richard Jackson, president of the Jackson Center for Evangelism and Encouragement in Brownwood,



MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION — Messengers and guests at the 2001 annual meeting of the Mississippi Baptist Convention gathered Oct. 30-31 in the Sanctuary of First Church, Jackson, to worship, celebrate, and conduct business. A total of 1,232 messengers registered for this year's meeting. (Photo by William H. Perkins Jr.)

Texas, brought the popular Bible Treasure series of studies that has become a tradition at the annual meetings.

Although the program for the annual meeting was completed prior to the September 11 terrorist attacks in New York City, Washington, D.C., and Pennsylvania, planners improvised a number of special observances. Those observances included a time of pledges to the American and Christian flags and the Bible; a multimedia piano solo by Max Ponder, pianist for First Church, Mendenhall; and a multimedia vocal solo by Karly Stuart, a member of First Church, Picayune.

The convention sessions also featured Scripture reading in four of the many languages in which Mississippi Baptists worship God:

- ◆ Vietnamese, by Trung Tran, pastor of Vietnamese Church, Biloxi.

- ◆ Choctaw, by Calvin Gibson, pastor of Hopewell Church, Philadelphia.

- ◆ Chinese, by Geewei Lee, member of First Church, Jackson.

- ◆ Spanish, by Jose

Lopez, pastor of Iglesia El Buen, Forest.

Worship in music was presented by the Sanctuary Choir of First Church, Mendenhall; combined choirs of Southside Church, Jackson, and Morrison Heights Church, Clinton; One Voice, an ensemble sponsored by the Church Music Department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention

Board; Mississippi Singing Churchmen; Carpenter's Wood ensemble from Baptist-affiliated William Carey College in Hattiesburg; and the Ladies Ensemble from William Carey College.

Resolutions were also approved addressing:

- ◆ appreciation for those who have "served this convention faithfully as a labor of love."

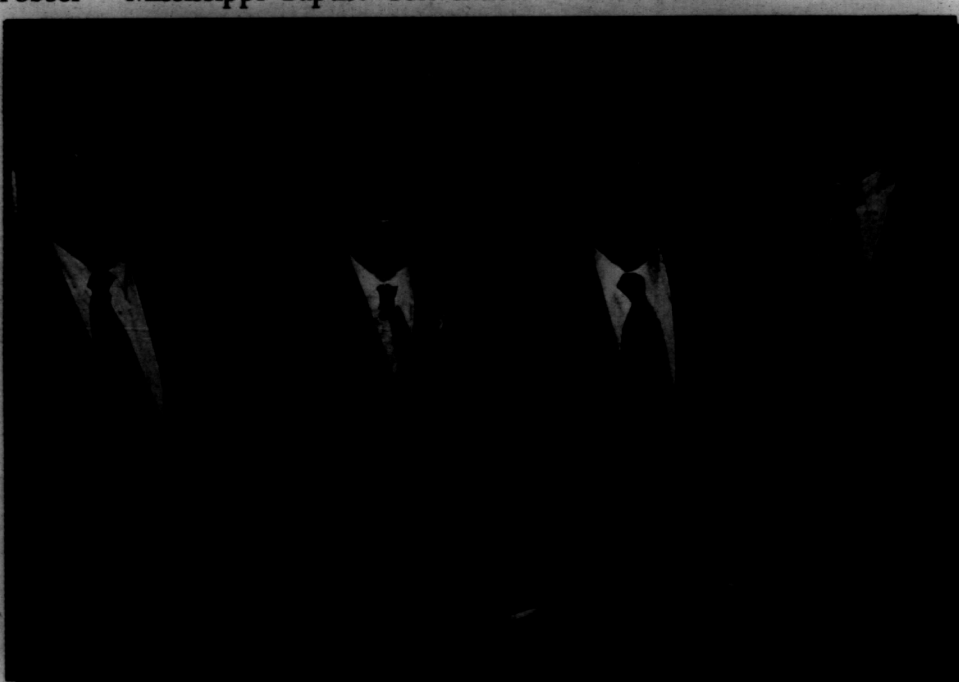
- ◆ the recent terrorist attacks, offering sympathy to the victims and their families and urging Mississippi Baptists to "pray for the reign of the Prince of Peace."

- ◆ domestic violence, encouraging Mississippi Baptists to seek training on domestic violence and maintain up-to-date resources to assist victims.

- ◆ human embryonic stem cell research, expressing concern that such research is the taking of

human life that could lead to even more abortions, and asking the U.S. Congress to maintain the existing ban on the use of tax dollars to fund such research.

- ◆ the life and career of James L. Travis, who recently retired after 36 years as professor of biblical studies at Baptist-affiliated Blue Mountain College in Blue Mountain.



CONVENTION OFFICERS — Mississippi Baptist Convention officers for 2001-02, elected at the annual meeting of the Mississippi Baptist Convention October 30-31 at First Church, Jackson, are (from left) assistant recording secretary Michael Weeks, pastor of Pleasant Hill Church, Olive Branch; first vice-president Bill Hardin, pastor of First Church, Picayune; president Frank Pollard, pastor of First Church, Jackson; and second vice-president Ernest Sadler, missions director for Jackson Association in Pascagoula. Not pictured is recording secretary Gus Merritt of Newton. (Photo by William H. Perkins Jr.)

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2001 MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, JACKSON

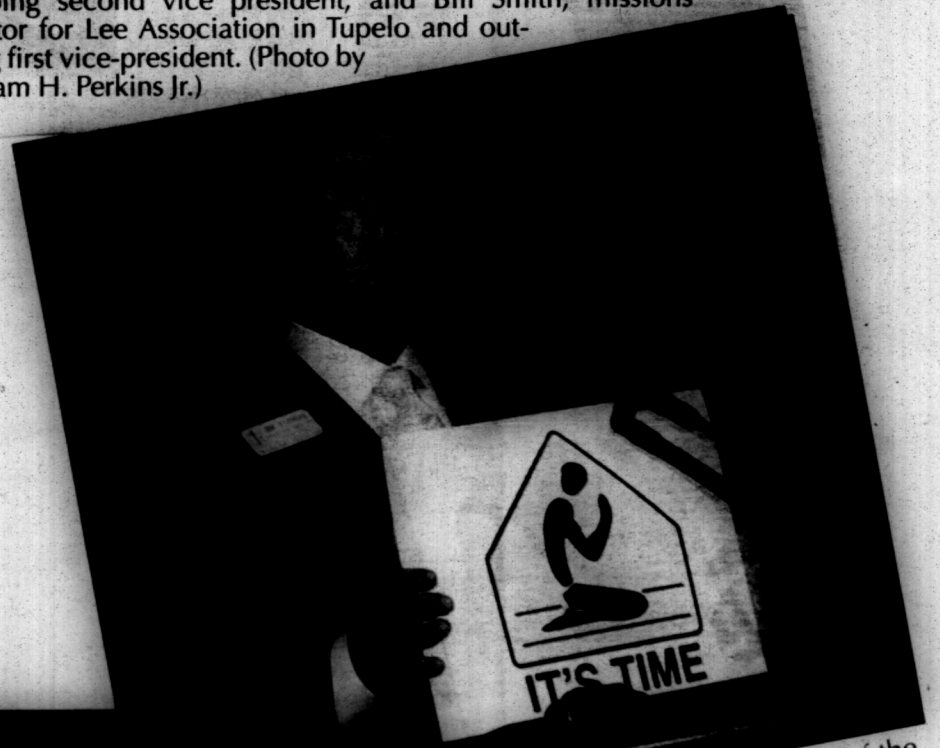


PASSING THE GAVEL — Frank Pollard (left), pastor of First Church, Jackson, and incoming president of the Mississippi Baptist Convention, accepts the gavel October 31 from outgoing President Kermit McGregor, pastor of First Church, Mendenhall. McGregor made the presentation just before declaring the adjournment of the 166th annual meeting of the Mississippi Baptist Convention. (Photo by William H. Perkins Jr.)



THANKS FOR SERVICE — Kermit McGregor (left), pastor of First Church, Mendenhall, and outgoing president of the Mississippi Baptist Convention, accepts a plaque of appreciation from Jim Futral, executive director-treasurer of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, for his service during two terms as president of the convention. Also receiving commendations were Dale Holloway (second from left), pastor of Hickory Ridge Church, Florence, and outgoing second vice president; and Bill Smith, missions director for Lee Association in Tupelo and outgoing first vice-president. (Photo by William H. Perkins Jr.)

SCRIPTURE IN CHOCTAW — Calvin Gibson, pastor of Hopewell Church, Philadelphia, reads a Scripture passage in his Native American Choctaw language October 30 at the 2001 annual meeting of the Mississippi Baptist Convention at First Church, Jackson. (Photo by William H. Perkins Jr.)



IT'S TIME — Jim Futral, executive director-treasurer of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, urges messengers to the 2001 Mississippi Baptist Convention annual meeting to take home signs encouraging people to pray. The signs and wooden stakes on which to mount the signs are being supplied by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board. (Photo by William H. Perkins Jr.)



COMBINED VOICES — The combined choirs of Southside Church, Jackson, and Morrison Heights Church, Clinton, present special music at the October 30 afternoon session of the 2001 annual meeting of the Mississippi Baptist Convention. (Photo by William H. Perkins Jr.)

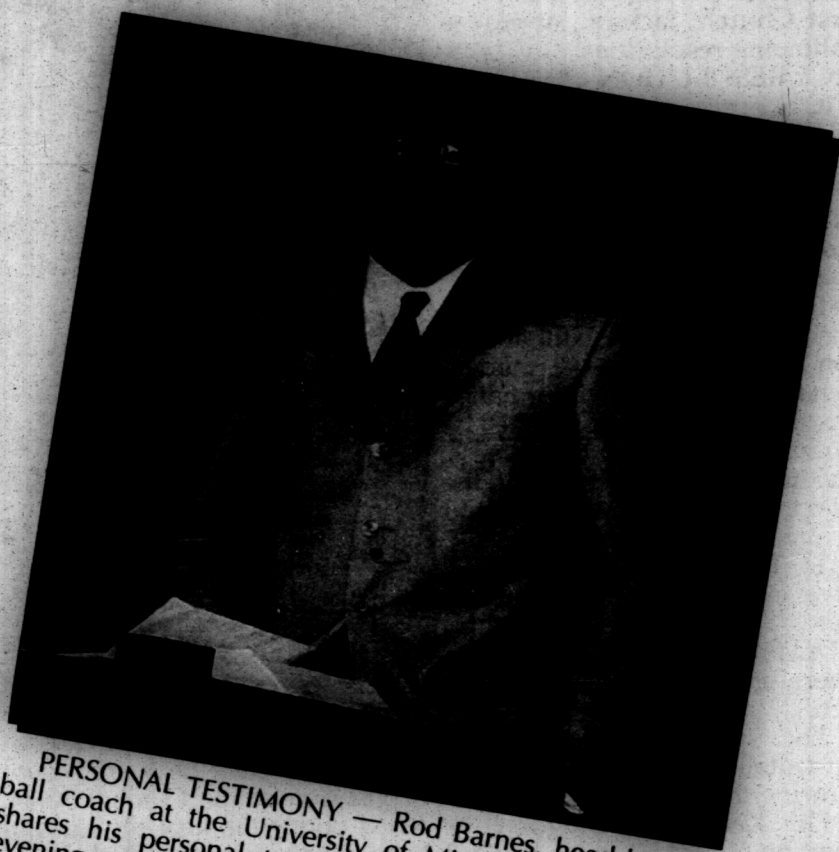
MISSISSIPPI
BAPTIST

BAPTIST CONVENTION

JACKSON • OCTOBER 30-31



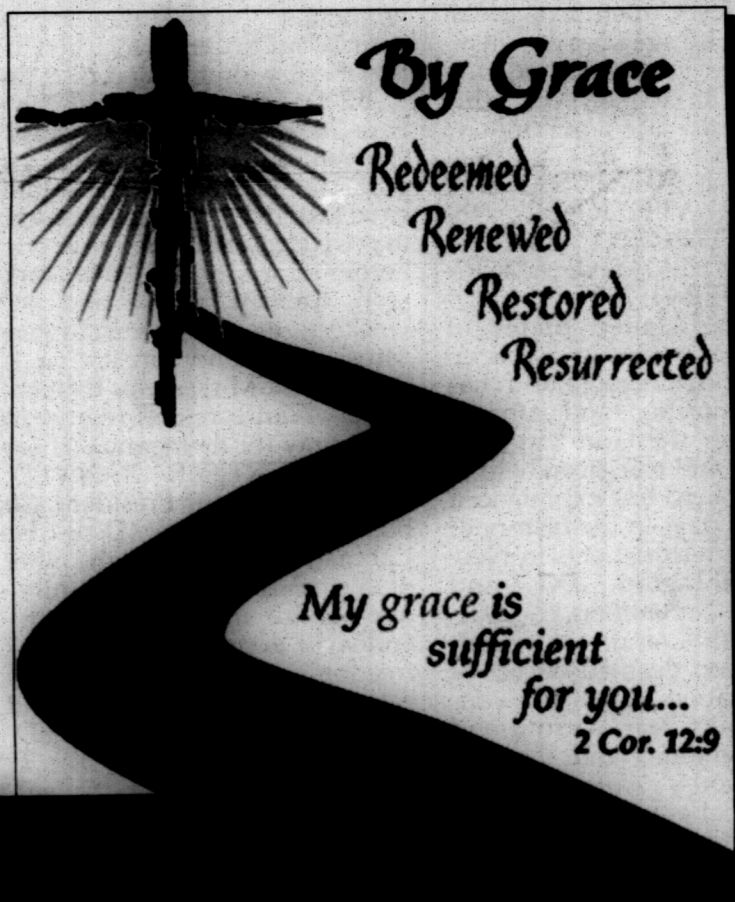
WORSHIP IN SONG — Members of the Sanctuary Choir of First Church, Mendenhall, prepare to sing October 30 in the Sanctuary of First Church, Jackson, at the 2001 annual meeting of the Mississippi Baptist Convention. The church's pastor, Kermit McGregor, presided over the meeting in his second and final term as president of the convention. (Photo by William H. Perkins Jr.)



PERSONAL TESTIMONY — Rod Barnes, head basketball coach at the University of Mississippi in Oxford, shares his personal testimony during the October 30 evening session of the Mississippi Baptist Convention annual meeting at First Church, Jackson. (Photo by William H. Perkins Jr.)



TREASURING THE BIBLE — Richard Jackson, president of the Jackson Center for Evangelism and Encouragement in Brownwood, Texas, delivered the popular Bible Treasure series of studies October 30-31 at the 2001 annual meeting of the Mississippi Baptist Convention at First Church, Jackson. (Photo by William H. Perkins Jr.)



VOICES IN PRAISE — The Newlife Quartet performs Gospel music favorites at the October 29 evening session of the 2001 Mississippi Baptist Pastor's Conference at First Church, Jackson. Members of the group include (from left) Darryl Smith, Ed Meadows, Steve Carr, and Glen Floyd. (Photo by William H. Perkins Jr.)



MISSISSIPPI
BAPTISTS

Resolutions approved by convention's messengers

Messengers to the 2001 annual meeting of the Mississippi Baptist Convention, meeting October 30-31 at First Church, Jackson, approved the following resolutions:

No. 1 RESOLUTION OF APPRECIATION

WHEREAS, the one-hundred-sixty-sixth annual session of the Mississippi Baptist Convention has again been the beneficiary of the gracious hospitality of the First Baptist Church of Jackson, and

WHEREAS, we the messengers of the one-hundred-sixty-sixth annual session have been blessed, guided, and challenged by the informative and inspirational program planned by the Committee on Order of Business, the institutions and agencies of the Mississippi Baptist Convention, and the several officers and committees;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED, that we express grateful appreciation to:

1. Dr. Frank Pollard, pastor, the members and staff of First Baptist Church;

2. The speakers, singers, and instrumentalists, who led us in worship during the Convention;

3. Dr. Kermit McGregor, our Convention President, who has led in his second year as president with an emphasis upon "By Grace-Redeemed, Renewed, Restored, Resurrected."

4. All the officers, members of all boards, trustees of all agencies and institutions, committee members, and volunteers who have served this Convention faithfully as a labor of love.

No. 2 RESOLUTION OF MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION IN RESPONSE TO TERRORIST ATTACKS ON THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA ON SEPTEMBER 11, 2001

WHEREAS, the United States of America, which has served as a beacon for freedom and democracy, and has gladly offered protection and support for nations all over the world in their quest for freedom and has given help to the weak and broken, has experienced one of the darkest days in the history of mankind with the terrorist acts in New York City, Washington, DC, and Pennsylvania, on September 11, 2001, which have taken thousands of innocent lives and have been deemed an act of war against our nation, and which continue to create pain, fear, sorrow and anger in our nation today, and

WHEREAS, God's Word says in Romans 13:1-2, "Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God. Therefore, whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves"; and, we as followers of Jesus Christ believe that our nation, though not perfect, has been established on the foundational principles of the Truths of God's Word and that the Declaration of Independence of the United States promises life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness to all its citizens; and, we believe that the attacks on the United States on September 11 are attacks on those foundational Truths of God's Word and the Constitution of the United States of America and that those attacks have shown a complete disregard for the sanctity of human life; and



REPORTING RESOLUTIONS — Robert Upchurch (at pulpit), member of Calvary Church, Tupelo, and chair of the resolutions committee for the 2001 annual meeting of the Mississippi Baptist Convention October 30-31 at First Church, Jackson, presents a portion of the resolutions report during the final session of the annual meeting. Members of the resolutions committee on hand for the report included (from left) Thad Moore, pastor of Poplar Springs Drive Church, Meridian; Greg Harper, member of Crossgates Church, Brandon; Carlock Broome, member of Pope Church, Pope; and Bill Hurt, pastor of First Church, Natchez. (Photo by William H. Perkins Jr.)

WHEREAS, God has appointed government as the institution to protect and maintain justice and protection for all people of every kindred and race; therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, that the messengers of the 166th Mississippi Baptist Convention, offer our sympathy, support and prayers to the families who have lost loved ones in this tragedy; and that we also acknowledge and honor the heroic efforts of the New York policemen, firemen, rescue and emergency workers, as well as volunteers from across our nation including Southern Baptist and Mississippi Baptist Disaster Relief volunteers and resolve to continue to pray for them, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we shall pray for our President, George W. Bush, Vice President, Dick Cheney, the Cabinet, Congress, and the other leaders of our nation and prayerfully support our service men and women as they endeavor to protect us and our priceless freedoms and as they attempt to eradicate terrorism in our world, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we "pray for the reign of the Prince of Peace" and recommit ourselves to carry out the Great Commission of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, in Mississippi, in the United States of America, and throughout the world, and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that our response today is rooted in the love of and respect for life and the preservation of life and the freedoms we hold dear; and be it known that our deepest desire is that God will bring revival to America and the rest of the world, and that millions of people will come to a personal relationship with God through Jesus Christ.

No. 3 RESOLUTION ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

WHEREAS, domestic violence is the leading cause of injury to women between ages 15 and 44 in the United States - more than car accidents, muggings, and rapes combined - and a woman is beaten every 15 seconds, and

WHEREAS, battered women are

more likely to suffer miscarriages and to give birth to babies with low birth weights, and

WHEREAS, a large percentage of the young men between the ages of 11 and 20 who are serving time for homicide have killed their mother's abuser, and

WHEREAS, women of all cultures, races, occupations, income levels, and ages are battered, and

BE IT RESOLVED, that we, the messengers of the 166th annual session of the Mississippi Baptist Convention, encourage all pastors, people involved in care-giving ministries, volunteers, and church officers be trained to recognize and respond to domestic violence by educating themselves about restraining orders, shelter programs, and actions that could jeopardize the safety of women and children, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that pastors are strongly encouraged to talk about domestic violence from the pulpit, and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that churches are encouraged to maintain an up-to-date listing for referrals to local coordinated-response agencies, such as shelters, rape crisis centers, and child protective services.

No. 4 RESOLUTION ON HUMAN EMBRYONIC AND STEM CELL RESEARCH

WHEREAS, developments in human stem cell research have brought into fresh focus the dignity and status of the human embryo, and

WHEREAS, the Bible teaches that human beings are made in the image and likeness of God (Gen. 1:27; 9:6) and protectable human life begins at conception, and

WHEREAS, efforts to rescind the ban on public funding of human embryo research rely on a crass utilitarian ethic which would sacrifice the lives of the few for the benefit of the many, and

WHEREAS, current law against federal funding of research in which human embryos are harmed and/or

destroyed reflects well-established national and international legal and ethical norms against misusing any human being for research purposes, and

WHEREAS, the use of human embryos in research would likely lead to an increase in the number of abortions and create a market for aborted embryos and other fetal tissues, and

WHEREAS, some forms of human stem cell research require the destruction of human embryos in order to obtain the cells for such research, and Southern Baptists are on record for their decades-long opposition to abortion except to save the physical life of the mother and their opposition to destructive human embryo research, and

WHEREAS, exciting advances in human stem cell research are on the horizon which do not require the destruction of embryos, leading the British Medical Journal to state that the use of human embryonic stem cells "may soon be eclipsed by the more readily available and less controversial adult stem cells", and

WHEREAS, treatments for Alzheimer's, diabetes, Parkinson's disease, and a host of maladies may soon be within our reach without sacrificing human embryos, and

BE IT RESOLVED, that we, the messengers of the 166th annual session of the Mississippi Baptist Convention reaffirm our vigorous opposition to the destruction of innocent human life, including the destruction of human embryos, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we call upon the United States Congress to maintain the existing ban on the use of tax dollars to support research which requires the destruction of human embryos, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we call upon those private research centers which perform such experiments to cease and desist from research which destroys human embryos, the most vulnerable members of the human community, and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that we encourage support for the development of alternative treatments which do not require human embryos to be killed.

No. 5 RESOLUTION COMMENDING DR. JAMES L. TRAVIS

WHEREAS, Dr. James L. Travis has faithfully completed 36 years of service to Blue Mountain College as a professor of Biblical studies, and

WHEREAS, he and his wife, Lucille, have been Godly examples to the college, students, and convention through their Christian service, and

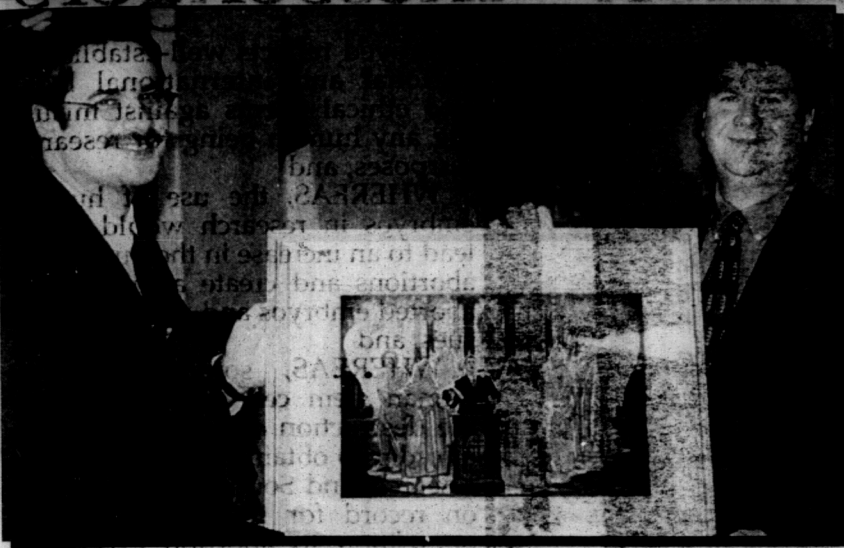
WHEREAS, he has taught Biblical studies in numerous churches throughout our convention, and served as an interim pastor of many churches during his tenure at Blue Mountain College, and

WHEREAS, he has served as a spiritual mentor to countless students over the years, and many of these students have gone forward to lead our convention and local churches, and

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED, that we express our love and appreciation to Dr. James L. Travis for his service to Blue Mountain College and the Mississippi Baptist Convention, and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the 2001 Mississippi Baptist Convention Annual be dedicated to Dr. James L. Travis.

JUST FOR THE RECORD



Applegate and Kennedy

The deacons of First Church, Lexington, presented Doug Applegate with a framed print entitled "The Pastor" during the worship services on Sunday, Oct. 14, as part of Pastor's Appreciation Month. Deacon, vice chairman David Kennedy (right) is

shown making the presentation to Applegate.

Everlasting Life from New Albany will be the featured musical group for the monthly sing at Cedarview Church, Olive Branch, on Nov. 17. For additional information, call (662) 895-6967.

A mission team from Oak Hill Church, Booneville, traveled to Newark, Delaware, June 15-22. The group worked on the Baptist Student Ministry House, which was purchased last August at the University of Delaware. They also gave the Baptist Student Union \$300 to purchase new shutters and pay for some of the electrical equipment. Pictured

(from left, front row) are Tammie Williams, Daniel Loveless, Amanda Rinehart, Kevin Williams, Kim Anderson, Ann Floyd, Roma Nell Rowland; (back row) Josh Williams, Rolf Rinehart, Mark Cagle, Ronny Rowland, and Greg Downs. Not pictured are Catherine Koon, Robert Junior Koon, and Bob Prather. Mark Cagle is pastor.



Mission team from Oak Hill Church, Booneville

Homecomings

Horseshoe Church, Tchula: Nov. 11; worship service, 10:45 a.m., with lunch following in the fellowship hall; Glen Warrington, guest speaker; Kerry Burroughs, pastor.

First, Lauderdale: Nov. 11; worship service, 11 a.m.; covered dish meal following worship service; Mike Russell, evangelist; Mark McIntyre, music; Jerry Bishop, pastor.

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Dr. Jim Futral, speaker
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NOVEMBER 17

11 a.m. - 3 p.m. - Bob and Larry
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12 - 1:30 p.m. - Terry Blackstock
Seed Sowers
(puppet/drama)
1 - 2 p.m. -
2 - 3:30 p.m. - Toby Mack
of DC Talk
Refreshments served.



YOU CAN RESPOND RIGHT NOW!

Simply share the following prayer with God in your own words:

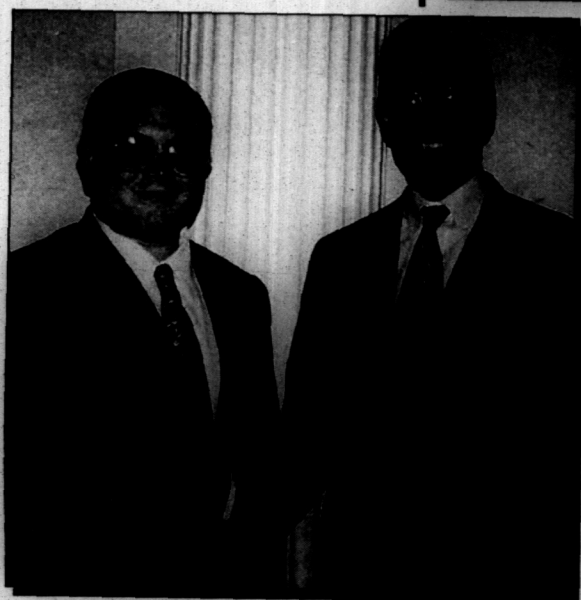
1. Lord, I admit that I need you.
(I have sinned.)
2. I want forgiveness for my sins and freedom from eternal death.
(I repent.)
3. I believe Jesus died and rose from the grave to forgive my sins and to restore my relationship with you.
(I believe in Jesus.)
4. By faith, I invite Jesus Christ into my life. From this time on, I want to live in a loving relationship with him.
(I receive Christ as my Savior and Lord.)

But as many as received him, to them he gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in his name (John 1:12).

If you make a decision for Jesus Christ today, contact a local Baptist church for spiritual guidance.

Grand Opening Activities
followed by a 7-day Celebration Sale Nov. 17 - 24

BAPTIST COLLEGE NEWS



Cook and Wilson

Ronald Cook, a Mississippi College junior major from Magee, is the recipient of the Thurman Bryant Scholarship awarded annually by the Board of Ministerial Education of the Mississippi Baptist Convention. Cook is preparing for ministry as a pastor. Pictured with Cook (left) is Steve Wilson, president of the Board of Ministerial.

Charles W. Whitten of Clinton, has been selected as the 2001 Distinguished Sociology/Social Work and Family Studies Department Alumnus. He is also a graduate of Southern Seminary. Whitten is Emeritus Southern Baptist Missionary, having served from 1947 until his retirement in 1987 in assignments in Argentina, Spain, Canary Islands, and Equatorial Guinea. Pictured with Whitten is his wife Indy.



The Whittens

Sandra Nash of Clinton, a 1973 mathematics and computer science graduate of Mississippi College (MC), has been selected as the 2001 Distinguished Mathematics and Computer Science alumnus. Pictured with Nash is Lloyd Roberts, interim president at MC.



Nash and Roberts

Blue Mountain College department of speech and theatre will present William Gibson's play, *The Miracle Worker*, Nov. 13-17 at 7:30 p.m. in the Garrett Fine Arts Center on campus. For additional information and reservations, call (662) 685-4771, ext. 131.

Blue Mountain College (BMC) will host high school juniors and seniors at the annual high school weekend on Nov. 16-17. To make reservations, call (800) 235-0136 by Nov. 9. Information about the college will also be available on the BMC web site at www.bmc.edu.

Thomas D. Cockrell has been selected as the 2001 Humanities Teacher Award recipient at Blue Mountain College (BMC). Cockrell was awarded his PhD from Mississippi State University in 1989. He has served as chair of the Department of History/Division of Social Science at BMC since 1992.

The Mississippi section of the American Chemical Society held its annual awards ceremonies on the campus of Mississippi College (MC). At the event, MC chapter of the Student Affiliates of the American Chemical Society (SAACS) was given the 2001 Outstanding Chapter Award for the second consecutive year. This is the third time this award has been given to the MC chapter in the past 4 years. The MC chapter has also been the recipient of three consecutive national awards. Student officers of SAACS are Melissa Bagwell, president; Karen Hand, vice-president; Jalin Wood, treasurer; Katie Sullivan, secretary. Students present at the ceremonies were Jonathon Carroll, Luke Gatlin, Andrea Barker, Ashley Ringer, Patricia Honea, Casey Patrick, CJ Stephenson, and Cory Toyota.

Coats needed for Afghan children

Children 2 Children, a ministry to provide coats to Afghan children in preparation for the coming winter, is collecting children's jackets in coordination with the United States Department of Defense. According to a source cited by Children 2 Children from the Department of Defense, shipping might be anytime within the next two weeks.

The organization is requesting coats in children's sizes up to size 12. Coats should be clean, not in need repair, and identified by size. Muted colors are preferred, in tans, browns, dark greens, and blues. No logos or bright colors, or anything that would call attention of the Taliban and others who might inflict punishment. No adult coats, please.

Information about this ministry has been forwarded to all the associational directors of missions in Mississippi. Broadmoor Church in Madison has been designated as the central collection point for the coats, with other collection points in Grenada, Meridian, and McComb.

Deadline for delivery to Broadmoor Church is November 12. For more information, call (601) 291-2304. On the World Wide Web, information can be found at www.norvasen.com, or www.children2children.net.

Jeffery Lenn Clark, pastor of First Church, Hattiesburg, has been named Young Alumnus of the Year by Mississippi College (MC). Clark graduated from MC in 1983. He is also a graduate of New Orleans Seminary. Pictured (from left) are Lloyd Roberts, interim president, and Clark.



Roberts and Clark

MS POSITIONS AVAILABLE

LIGHTHOUSE BAPTIST CHURCH, 505 Cleary Rd., Richland, MS is seeking a bivocational pastor and a pianist. Call Marcus Ross at (601) 932-1137.

CHURCH AVERAGING 100 in Sunday School seeks full-time associate pastor/minister of music and youth. Please send resume to Calvary Baptist Church, 2878 Old Hwy. 27, Vicksburg, MS 39180; or fax to (601) 636-7574.

OAKLAND BAPTIST CHURCH, Benton-Tippah Association, is in the process of looking for a bivocational youth minister. Call (662) 223-5893 if interested.

MT. PISGAH BAPTIST CHURCH, Enid, Miss., is seeking a part-time youth/children director. Position includes Bible study and recreation. Send resume to Mt. Pisgah Baptist Church, 605 Enid Teasdale Road, Enid, MS 38927 or email: cturgis38927@yahoo.com or fax (662) 623-7910.

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, MADISON, is seeking a director for its weekday child care/education program. Applicants must meet Mississippi state licensure requirements. For additional information, contact Glenn Holder, Church Business Administrator, P.O. Box 400, Madison, MS 39430-0400 or email gholder@fbc-madison.org (no attachments).

FBC, MOSS POINT, is seeking a full-time pastor. Send resume to: FBC Pastor Search Committee, 4807 Main Street, Moss Point, MS 39563; or call (228) 475-8142.

WANTED: YOUTH MINISTER. Mail or fax resumes to First Baptist Church, P.O. Box 487, Plantersville, MS 38862; (662) 842-3632.

MIDWAY BAPTIST CHURCH in Meridian is seeking a full-time secretary. Must have computer skills. Send resume to 4579 Old 8th Street Rd. N., Meridian, MS 39307 or call (601) 483-5497.

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KINGWOOD FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH in Kingwood, Tex., is accepting resumes for the following full-time positions: minister of worship/outreach for contemporary worship services with praise team and to enhance outreach programs; and minister of childhood education for birth - grade 6. Send resumes to Kingwood First Baptist Church, 2303 Tree Lane, Kingwood, TX 77339, ATTN: Mike David or email resume to mdavid@kfbc.org.

CHILDREN'S HOME HOUSEPARENTS: wonderful youth ministry opportunity! The Baptist Home for Children in Jacksonville, Fla., is seeking committed Christian married couples for houseparents in our residential and developmental ministries. We serve both boys and girls ages 5 to 17 who have experienced neglect, abuse, or abandonment. Salary and benefits include off duty housing. Please contact Randy Harrison, Northeast Florida Area Administrator; by calling (904) 721-2711 faxing (904) 721-3620; or emailing: rharrison@fbchomes.org.

NO EVIDENCE

Editor:

In regard to the letter to the editor, Whither Evolution? In the October 18 issue, the writer stated that we can see God's hand at work in nature. I agree. However, I do not see evidence of evolution.

Since his reason for supporting evolution is not stated, please allow me to comment on two points relating to the amount of time necessary for evolution to have taken place. As the Genesis record shows, God created the day/night cycle before he created life forms. The fossil record of the earliest life forms is evidence of a day/night frequency that would support such life. The first day was necessarily very near the length of a present day. This makes the "Very Long Day" theory, concerning creation, scientifically untenable.

The popular "Gap Theory" has its own problems. Contrary to the beliefs of many, the Hebrew text of Gen. 1:2 does not support a "re-creation". Even from the geological perspective the "Gap Theory" denies the uniformitarianism that geology requires. More importantly, the fossil record from the era necessary to the "Gap Theory" is itself evidence of death. This would

place death prior to the cause of death, which is sin.

Certainly, there are many other considerations. May God's spirit guide us in our studies as we seek his truth.

Ralph Parsley
Gautier

FACE VALUE

Editor:

It is tragic that so many deceived Christians have caved in to the lie of evolution. Why can't we take God's Word at face value and accept by faith the fact that the universe and everything contained therein was created in six, literal, 24-hour days?

Luke 3 contains the genealogy of Christ all the way back to Adam. Adam was created in the same six-day period as the universe. Are there millions of years from Adam to Christ? The answer is a resounding no!

As John MacArthur has stated, man does not fare well who sits in judgment of God's word. I recommend Rev. MacArthur's book, *The Battle for the Beginning*, which articulately and passionately refutes the lie of evolution. It is available at the website www.gty.org. I also recommend Ken Ham's website www.answersingenesis.org.

Ham stands for the truth of Scripture, beginning at Gen. 1:1. I take that stand with Ham. What about you?

Anthony Powell
Waynesboro

EITHER/OR

Editor:

No doubt the Oct. 18 letter from Michael Williams regarding your October 4 article about the PBS series "Evolution" will garner dozens of letters in response. Mr. Williams states, "Everything about evolution suggests God's intelligent design." Quite the contrary. It is, in fact, the very nature of evolution that forces one to make an either/or choice between God's intelligent design and evolutionary theory. Williams is apparently asking us to accept that the Being of infinite wisdom we call God purposely made an imperfect creation which, through a violent, messy system of trial and error could attain some semblance of order. We are told that by those who defend this syntheses of God and evolution that God "directed" the results of this process.

My question is this: does logic dictate, in fact, does logic allow that One who is perfectly

wise would create imperfectly in the first place, and then direct the results to what he wanted it to be? It is fundamentally incomparable with the very definition of wisdom to do so.

Furthermore, how can God defend himself against the challenge that he never gave man a chance to be obedient in a perfect creation, if in fact there was never any perfection from which to fall?

It is the heart of New Testament doctrine that Christ died to redeem man from sin. If you dismiss the Adam and Eve story, how then do you define sin, and its origin? Did we "evolve" as sinful creatures? If so, wherein lay the opportunity for obedience? If sin is defined as falling short of perfection, then God himself is guilty of sin in that he created imperfectly!

One can debate ad infinitum the "scientific" interpretation of the age of a rock, or the search for a "missing link," but there is no context for understanding these discoveries apart from one's world view. A world view which revolves around Christ's sacrificial death for sinful man cannot help but find itself in conflict with the major tenets of evolutionary theory.

Gerry Rainey
Ripley



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Unsigned letters will not be printed. No multi-copy or form letters will be used.

Each correspondent must include an address and telephone number for verification. In special instances, name may be withheld at writer's request and editor's discretion.

Please include the name of cooperating Mississippi Baptist church where correspondent is a member. (Mississippi Baptists' letters will receive priority when space is limited.)

Letters must be limited to 250 words. All correspondence is subject to editing.

Correspondents should refrain from personal attacks. The opinions expressed in letters to the editor do not necessarily reflect the views of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

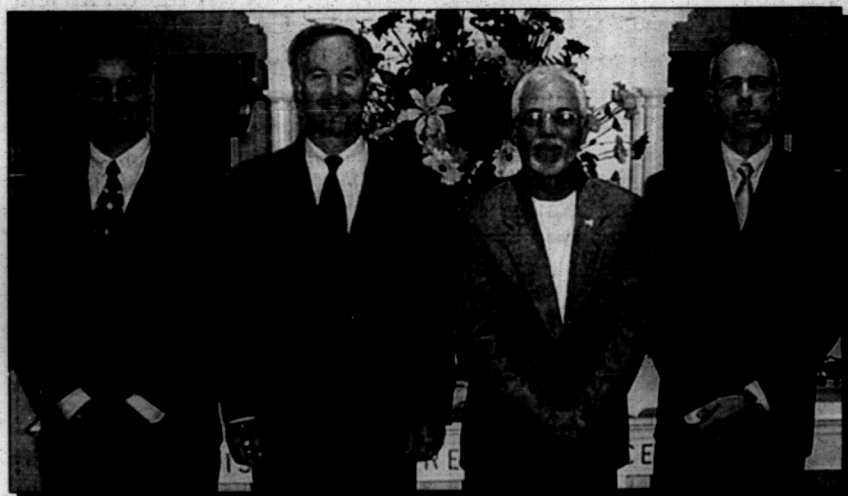
No more than one letter from any individual will be printed during a three-month period.

When in the judgement of the editor a given issue has received sufficient attention, correspondence dealing with it will no longer be published and a notice will be printed to that effect.

NAMES IN THE NEWS

First Church, Picayune, recently ordained four men to the office of deacon. They are (from left) Todd Rayburn, Larry Hubbard, Kenneth Blanchard, and Mike Raybon. Bill Hardin is pastor.

Jerry Derrick was ordained on Sept. 30 as a deacon of White Oak Church, Magee. Pictured (from left) are Tim Robertson, pastor; Derrick; and Jim Overby, chairman of deacons.



Rayburn, Hubbard, Blanchard, and Raybon



Robertson, Derrick, and Overby

Longview Church, Starkville, licensed Shannon Stafford to the ministry on Sept. 30. He is currently serving at Reeds Chapel Church, Stewart. Pictured (from left, back row) are Bert Nail, Jim Simpson, Gene Pellum, Roy Sanders, deacons; (front row) Stafford, and Steve Huber, pastor.

years of service on Oct. 27 and 28. The church will host a fish fry on Saturday night followed by a testimonial service. On Sunday, special guests Kelly McGinnis will lead the music and Tommy Pirtle will be speaking. Following this service there will be a potluck meal.

East Booneville Church, Booneville, will honor Jim Holcomb, pastor, for his 10



Nail, Simpson, Pellum, Sanders, Stafford, and Huber

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FAMILY BIBLE STUDY

Tell everyone

Acts 8:26-40

By Wayne Marshall

A young lady approached me after services two weeks ago to ask a very personal question. "Pastor," she began, "does our church accept people from other cultures and backgrounds?" My heart sank, but I quickly assured her that we did.

Last week in our study we looked at what to tell others (the Good News of the Gospel). Today's lesson centers on who to tell: all people, including those culturally different from us.

Notice the touch of the Spirit (8:26-29). Philip was in the midst of a great experience

of revival. Things were going well. Yet it is extremely easy to get too comfortable in seasons of blessing.

The angel of the Lord spoke to Philip to send him forward into new territory. Philip changed gears in his ministry and ended up in a desert place. Take note of a phrase Ron Dunn always said about this passage: one must always secure the objectives of the Spirit.

When we share we must know that we are sharing with someone for whom Christ died. Verse 28 gives us a prophetic involvement as God's Word



Marshall

reveals that this man had been to worship and was reading from the Old Testament Scriptures (Isaiah). It must be noted, that usually when someone is willing to be used of God and someone else is being directed by God's Word to search for truth, when they get together, somebody is going to get saved.

Notice the timing of the Spirit (8:29-33). Verse 29 shows us the prompting of the Spirit that led to Philip's personal witness. How many times have excuses been made for our fears and prejudices?

Philip and the Eunuch were not culturally compatible. Neither were they educationally compatible. It is evident they were not at all theologically compatible. The Spirit of God said that the timing was right and the moment needed to be

seized for God's kingdom. So men who were culturally apart came together over the issue of what to do with Jesus.

Notice the truth of the Spirit (8:34-38). When the Eunuch asked the question of "who?" in verse 34, the door swung open. Verse 35 tells us that Philip preached unto him Jesus. That is the only message. Three magnificent facts come blazing out at us from this part of the story.

First, he opened his mouth. That means he witnessed and shared the message of Christ. Second, he preached Jesus. He explained the Gospel message in detail and with enthusiasm.

Third, the man was gloriously saved. One might ask "how do you know that?" If one takes baptism as an outward sign of an inward change (and it is), then adds to that verse 37 showing the belief with all of the heart, then Hallelujah!

Someone met Jesus!

The transformation by the Spirit (8:39-40). Do not dare forget these verses. The Eunuch is rejoicing. Philip is now to be used somewhere else and the Spirit takes him away.

There are still two great truths to be decided. The Ethiopian official took the Gospel with him and his people group which according to two commentators, allowed the Gospel to spread into Africa. That's one mighty missions story.

The other is more personal. Are you free to be used by the Spirit? Could you share Jesus to someone different from you? Would people who are different from you be welcome in your church family? Oh, that God would free us by His Spirit to minister because, people matter to God.

Marshall is pastor of Longview Heights Church in Olive Branch.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

Maintain confidence

2 Thessalonians 2:1-12

By Dell Scoper

Most people are interested in those future events pertaining to the end of the world. Consequently, even purely speculative as well as scientific forecasts, along with Scripture, draw their attention.

If we place our confidence in God's revelation about the issues surrounding the Second Coming of Christ, then we can maintain confidence in his certain return for his own, and his judgement on Satan and those who chose to follow him.

Rumors — correction of an erroneous view (vv. 1-3a). Verse 1 is a summary of 1 Thess. 4:13-18. "We ask you, brothers," provided a transition from what Paul had been saying about the Day of the Lord to an acute problem related to him.

It was clear to Paul that the subject of the Second Coming had become a source of disruption in the church. Paul needed to explain that the gathering of those in Christ to meet him in the air will begin the day of the Lord.

The erroneous information given the Thessalonians apparently came through three channels: prophecy — revelation claiming to be given by the Spirit; report or word — normal dialogue or conversation; and a letter — the authorship of which was attributed to Paul and for which he denied having written.

Rebellion — events related to Christ's return (vv. 3b-4). Two events will first transpire before Jesus' return: the rebellion must occur and the man of lawlessness or sin must be



Scoper

revealed. The rebellion, about which he had already instructed them, "the" signaling such, will be a revolt against God by those who are not his people.

As a climax to this rebellion, the man of lawlessness will be revealed. Who is he? Verses three, six, and eight seem to point to a definite individual, an actual person confirmed by the use of personal pronouns. Those who accept the Antichrist as master will, along with him, be "doomed to destruction."

Therefore, Christians need to be aware that Christ's return will be preceded by the rebellion of unbelievers, and by a wide-spread defection of professed Christians, as contrasted with true believers, along with the coming of a powerful leader who not only opposes God, but also sets himself up as divine.

Restraint — on the lawless one's power (vv. 5-7). In verse five a note of impatience may be detected in Paul's question.

If the Thessalonian believers had recalled his teaching, disturbing elements in the newly arisen false rumors could have been eliminated.

Our understanding of verses six and seven is ultimately related to our conception of the identification of both the man of lawlessness and the restrainer. Lack of consensus among Bible students cautions us not to be dogmatic about what Paul taught in Thessalonians.

Bible commentaries suggest various combinations of an abstract force and a personal figure as the restraining force already at work. In verse six the restrainer is neuter, "what;" in verse seven, the masculine gender, "he," probably refers to the same power and authority. Could it be an institution that could be embodied in a personal agent, i.e., the church and the Holy Spirit, or government and its rulers who enforce law and order?

Revelation — career and end of the lawless one (vv. 8-12). The man of lawlessness will emerge to deceive all who

have refused the truth of the Gospel. He will do so by working counterfeit miracles, signs, and wonders, defying all that is sacred.

Christ will appear to consume him and render him inoperative "by the breath of his mouth (Isaiah 11:4b)," and "destroy him by the splendor of his coming," a radiant, shining event. "For this reason," introduced the rationale why unbelievers will be deceived and condemned (Jn. 3:16, Rom. 3:23), because they had not believed the truth.

God does not will it, but such judgement on non-believers will be the natural outcome of the working of God's moral and spiritual law. Instead of enjoying God, they chose to enjoy sin.

We are called to fidelity, not to forecasting. Rather than trying to convince each other of our particular views, we are called to maintain confidence by comforting, strengthening, and encouraging one another in the light of his coming.

Scoper is a member of First Church, Laurel.

Guidelines for submitting news and photographs

The Baptist Record is pleased to publish news and photographs of special events that take place in cooperating churches of the Mississippi Baptist Convention.

News submitted for publication in The Baptist Record must be either (a) typewritten, (b) neatly printed on 8 1/2 by 11-inch paper, or (c) neatly printed on standardized forms provided by the newspaper. All articles must be received in writing; no articles will be accepted over the telephone.

News may be submitted electronically to the address below, and must be contained in the message segment of an e-mail form. Due to increasing virus threats,



no text attachments will be accepted. Photograph attachments are permissible.

Please make articles concise. Include the who, what, when, where details of the story, along with a contact person's address and telephone number.

Photographs may be color or black and white. Instant photos and digital printouts are not reproducible. Digital photos may be used if submitted as a JPEG file via either (a) e-mail, (b) three-and-a-half inch floppy disk, or (c) CD. Photos must be clear, sharp, and well-lighted.

All news items are subject to editing, and all photographs are subject to cropping. News items and/or photographs can be published one time only. Deadline for submitting news is one week prior to requested publication date.

Articles that are not date-sensitive will be published on a space-available basis. Requests to return photographs must be accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

Submit news and photographs to The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. FAX: (601) 292-3330. E-mail: baptistrecord@mbcb.org.

THE VILLAGE VIEW



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Gifts of Honor and Memory

A portion of *The Village View* is allocated each month to a list of Gifts of Honor and Memory. Many groups and individuals elect to pay tribute to others through this sensitive, meaningful, and helpful medium. This feature is hopefully designed to further honor, with taste and respect, those who are and have been special to our special friends.

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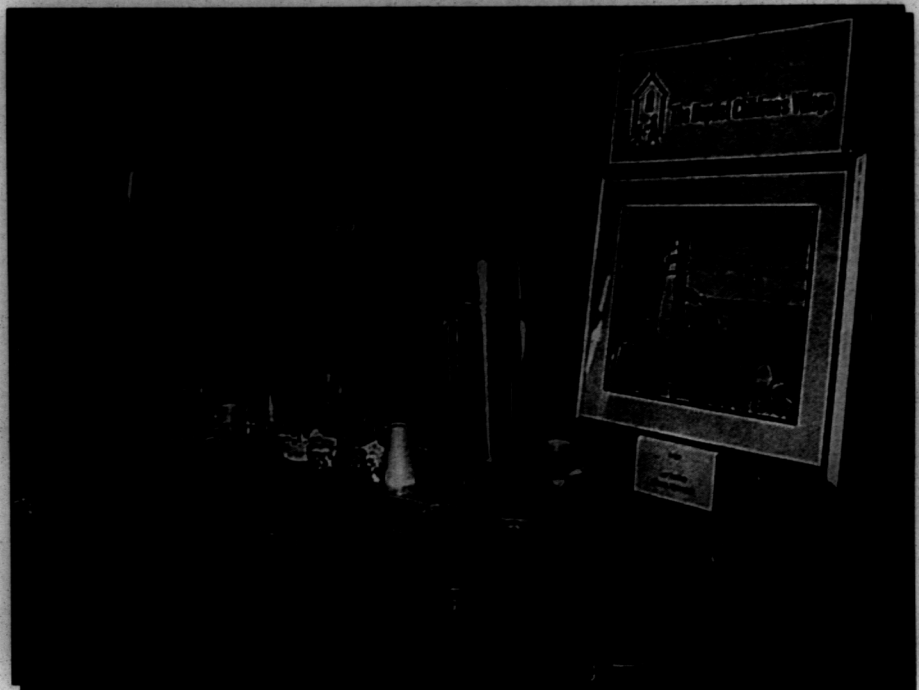
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Imprisoned missionary marks birthday

WACO, Texas (BP) — Dayna Curry turned 30 on Sunday, Nov. 4, in a prison in Afghanistan, yet according to letters released by their home church, she and Heather Mercer remain in good spirits.



IMPRISONED FOR CHRIST — These eight aid workers, including Americans Dayna Curry and Heather Mercer, remain in prison in Afghanistan on charges by Taliban authorities of sharing their Christian faith with Muslims. (Graphic courtesy of ASSIST News Service at www.assist-ministries.com)

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WUB, WKH FKLOGUHQ RI
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SVDOPV HOHYHQ: IRXU

Clue: W = T

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Matthew Twenty-Five: Forty.

"It is so good to hear that so many people are praying," Curry wrote to Antioch Community Church in Waco, Texas.

"I hope they are praying for this country along with us.... We believe that is one of the reasons we are here — to motivate and awaken people to pray for this nation," she wrote.

Mercer's words: 'God has called me' to missions

TULSA, Okla. (BP) — Four years ago, a young college student sat in international missions training preparing for what she called in 1997 "an exciting journey" — a mission trip to Budapest, Hungary.

Today, 24-year-old Heather Mercer's journey has taken her to Afghanistan where she and seven other foreign workers with Shelter Now Germany await a Taliban trial for allegedly sharing their Christian faith with Muslims.

In 1997, Mercer trained with Awe Star Ministries, a Tulsa, Okla.-based youth missions organization, for her first overseas mission trip to Hungary. Her present imprisonment in Afghanistan has humbled many who worked with her.

"One of my joys is not only training students, but also ministering alongside young missionaries like Heather," Walker Moore, president of Awe Star, said. "I am fortunate to see their passion grow as they discover God's purpose for their lives and choose to live according to that."

Awe Star's student missionary application process included an autobiographical sketch. The words Mercer wrote as a 20-year-old college student remain powerful today and, Moore believes, will encourage and inspire those seeking to live every day for the glory of God.

Mercer's autobiography, titled "The Story of My Christian Life," describes a

Mercer, 24, who was also arrested Aug. 3 by Taliban authorities on charges of sharing their faith in Christ, was equally upbeat in her message to the church.

"I'm so glad we know and love the One who carries the whole world in his hands," Mercer wrote. "I hope that in light of all the world's changing events... your lives are carrying on with some level of normalcy."

"I have seen more clearly in my time here what an exciting hour this world is in; but equally or more so what a dangerous hour. This helps to keep me sober and thankful."

Curry may celebrate her birthday belatedly with some reminders of home, if a gift package assembled at the U.S. Embassy in Pakistan makes it to the prison compound where she is being held.

Danny Mulkey, assistant pastor from Antioch, told the Waco Tribune-Herald that family and friends made a gift box filled with party hats, balloons, trick candles, and chocolate.

The box was put together in hopes it makes it onto the next Red Cross truck allowed into the prison.

"I'm still praying like crazy they'll get out," Mulkey told the newspaper. "If they go, [Curry] can take all that crazy stuff with her and celebrate here."

The two Baylor University graduates were among 24 workers with Shelter Now, a German-based ministry, who are being detained by the ruling Taliban authorities.

Only the eight Western workers are presently on trial, while 16 Afghan workers also continue to be detained.

California-based ASSIST news service reported Oct. 31 that the 16 are expected to face trial, but there is no word about their circumstances.

The news agency noted that persons familiar with the situation have said the Afghans could face the death penalty for allegedly aiding Westerners in preaching Christianity in the Muslim nation.

Antioch senior pastor Jimmy Seibert said they are waiting to hear from an associate of Pakistani attorney Atif Ali Khan, who is attempting to enter the capital city of Kabul.

journey that began in frustration, continued with surrender to Christ, and left a future wide open for God to use her to change others' lives as he did hers.

"God has healed me of past hurts, brought freedom from unforgiveness, and allowed me to accept myself as the precious creation he made me to be," she wrote.

"I am learning every day what it means to 'love the Lord your God with all your heart, mind, soul, and strength,' and to 'love your neighbor as yourself.' I believe these two Scriptures are foundational to the Christian life," she wrote.

Before Mercer became a Christian, she said she wanted to maintain sole control of her life. "I struggled with 'fitting in' with my peers, and I often found myself unhappy and frustrated," she wrote, "wondering that there had to be more to life. If there wasn't, I was ready for it to be over. Little did I know that Jesus was the solution to my desperate life."

Mercer wrote that at age 15 she chose to "actively accept the salvation [she] was so desperately seeking," and thereafter her life was never the same. She wrote of living in total abandonment for Jesus and a desire to "experience fully the power of Jesus Christ."

Moore said he saw in her a pure passion. He believes that passion probably led her to meet the needs of hurting people in Afghanistan.

He said the only recent news is the detainees were seen Oct. 28 and were still doing all right. An evangelical news agency reported Oct. 31 that the trial of the eight Shelter Now workers is on hold. The agency, Idea, quoted Shelter Now chairman, Joachim Jaeger, as saying, "No progress is being made."

The story also quoted attorney Khan as saying that the eight Christians expressed concern that a stray bomb may hit the detention facility where they are being held, but Khan also described them as being in good spirits.

The text of the excerpts from Curry's and Mercer's letters follows:

Dayna Curry writes: "It is so good to hear that so many people are praying. I hope they are praying for this country along with us. I'm sure they are. We believe that is one of the main reasons we are here — to motivate and awaken people to pray for this nation. If we weren't here I don't think near as many people would be lifting this place up."

"Our Father in heaven is up to something great for this nation — and all the prayers are needed to help it come to pass. We are excited to see what he will do. I'm so thankful for you and all the others at home that are laboring for us. I really don't think we would be doing so well if people weren't praying. We have seen God's favor in so many ways, and his presence has been incredible!"

Heather Mercer writes: "I have thought of you often and hope this letter finds you well! I never thought I'd write you from prison, at least not so soon! What a crazy place this world can be! I'm so glad we know and love the One who carries the whole world in his hands. I hope that in light of all the world's changing events, that your lives are carrying on with some level of normalcy."

"I have seen more clearly in my time here what an exciting hour this world is in; but equally or more so what a dangerous hour. This helps to keep me sober and thankful..."

"Though at times everything in me screams otherwise, we'll soon see the purpose and glory in this mad situation. May it be to glorify our friend and to rebuild this desperate nation. My heart is with you!"

"She's a self-starter, totally motivated by the Lord," he said. "She saw what needed to be done, and she did it."

Moore believes the words written in 1997 foreshadowed the life Mercer was to lead. Her words, he said, "are ironically prophetic of where she is now."

"(I)t is my desire that I would lay down whatever is to my profit and consider it loss for the sake of Jesus Christ my Lord," Mercer wrote. "I am learning what it means to be satisfied in the presence of Jesus Christ alone and to offer my life as a living sacrifice to him."

It is clear through her words, Moore said, that she "took seriously the call of Christ to Christians everywhere. She approached each day seeking God's will."

"God has clearly called me to a life of mission work, though I am still uncertain as to what nation he is calling me to," Mercer wrote. "As I stand today, Christ has called me to go and make disciples of all nations. His return is very near, and so many still need to know of his love for them. It is my desire to share that love with the people in Budapest, Hungary."

Now in 2001, God has called Heather to stand for his name in Afghanistan, Moore said. Her willingness to be where God wants her is evident in every word she wrote, Moore said.